

LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 1432
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

How to Hyphen and Divide English Words

Lloyd E. Smith



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HOW TO HYPHEN AND DIVIDE ENGLISH WORDS

THE HYPHEN

The *hyphen* is a mark used in writing or printing words to help the eye in reading them. It is a short dash (-). Its most common use is at the ends of lines in writing or printing, when it is necessary to break a word because of lack of space. If you glance down the side of this page, the outside right-hand edge, you will note several hyphens—they indicate to the eye that the word is incomplete, and that the remaining part of the word has been carried over to the beginning of the next line. There are definite rules for thus dividing or breaking words at the ends of lines. It is not correct to break them at any point. The division must always come between two *syllables*.

The correct division of any word by syllables can be learned by referring to any dictionary. In the dictionary, hyphens are used to show the correct manner of dividing the word into syllables. These hyphens are not to be included in the word, of course, when it is used in ordinary writing or printing. The second part of this book takes up in detail the rules for dividing words.

The hyphen is used between two parts of a compound word, sometimes, when it is desirable to indicate a close relationship between the two parts, or when it would be difficult to read the word if both parts were run together

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(solid). Or the hyphen may be used in spelling the word because of established usage. Unfortunately, the English language presents many inconsistencies, and it is impossible to make any absolute statements about what is or is not to be done.

For example, the word *great-uncle* is commonly spelled with a hyphen, but its synonym, *granduncle*, is customarily spelled solid—without a hyphen! There is as much reason for a hyphen in both words as in but one. Either compound is quite as easy as the other to read if spelled solid. Here usage steps in and dictates that *great-uncle* always be spelled with a hyphen, and that *granduncle* be spelled, preferably, without a hyphen (solid). There are many similar inconsistencies; often a noun is spelled as one word, while the adjective from the same compound requires a hyphen. For example, the term *fresh water* is familiar as a name to distinguish water that is not salt from the ocean or some other salty body of water. *Fresh water* is contrasted with *salt water*; the latter term is often used to mean the ocean. But the noun-use of the term keeps the two elements separated: *fresh water*. However, if the term is used as an adjective, as in *fresh-water fish*, it requires a hyphen.

There are no absolute rules that can be given for hyphenating compound words or phrases. The present tendency seems to be to use the hyphen as little as possible, except in words that have contained a hyphen from time immemorial. It is preferable to run the elements of a compound together (solid, without a hyphen),

if the compound is a genuine one—that is, if it has a meaning that its elements do not possess when not compounded. If the phrase or term has the same meaning when printed separate as it would if printed solid, the separate-word form is the better.

An example of a word of long standing, always spelled with a hyphen, is *looking-glass*. Another is *drawing-room*. Either word would be quite as easy to read without the hyphen. Consider the following compounds, which are established without hyphens: *bookkeeper*, *withhold*, *granddaughter*, *childlike*, *bootblack*, *overlap*, etc. The final court of appeal in any doubtful instance is a good dictionary.

Webster's New International Dictionary has the following pertinent remarks on the use of the hyphen:

In this dictionary the hyphen is used less frequently than it is by some authorities. In general, the two-word form has been preferred to the hyphenated form when the words have the same meaning in unconnected succession as when joined; and the solid-word form has been preferred to the hyphenated form when this solid form is not confusing to the eye. But these rules, however reasonable, cannot be rigidly applied, because good usage sometimes dictates a form not conforming to them. The practice of lexicographers, authors, and printers is so various in this matter that in a multitude of instances it is hypercritical or whimsical to pronounce dogmatically that either the hyphenated or unhyphenated form is the only correct one.

Frequently words are used adjectively in English, in particular circumstances, that are not ordinarily compounded. If two or more

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words are thus used adjectively, it is customary to hyphen them to avoid confusion in reading. For example, you might wish to describe someone prone to say, "I told you so." If you wished to use the four words, *I told you so* adjectively, you would write them with hyphens, thus: He is an *I-told-you-so* nuisance. In this connection, refer to the paragraph quoted from Webster's New International—*solid-word form* hyphens "*solid-word*" because it is used adjectively, but a little further on the two elements, *solid form*, are used, and are, of course, not hyphenated. *Solid word* used as a noun-element would probably not be hyphenated.

Consistency is an admirable virtue, but in hyphening English words it is a difficult virtue to keep unsullied. It is possible, of course, and highly desirable, to spell any particular compound consistently as two words, with a hyphen, or solid, throughout any given work, or throughout all the works issuing from one publishing house. A standard dictionary may be followed for this purpose; the spellings recorded in the dictionary, or given preference if two or more forms are listed, can thus be followed consistently. A Check List of Hyphenated Compound Words follows; it is hoped that this check list will prove valuable as a guide to the commoner compounds usually spelled with hyphens. For the most part the list has been based upon Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. It has been made as complete as possible, though some rather common hyphenated words may have been omitted.

If a two-word form or a compound word is

not found in this check list, but is of common occurrence, then most probably it may be spelled as two words or solid, depending on what the dictionary may record. (Refer to the paragraph quoted from Webster's New International, page 7.) Even if this check list indicates hyphens, if one chooses to vary from this somewhat, it is permissible to do so with words where considerable variation is common. No dictionary is absolute. Editors, printers, authors, and others using words a great deal, choose to follow one dictionary consistently so that they may avoid confusion. Their purpose is ever to be as clear as possible, so that they may be the more readily understood. Conforming to the listings of a good dictionary helps in achieving this aim.

A good example of a recent word about which usage is divided is *psycho-analysis*. The Halde-man-Julius Publications prefer the hyphenated form, but the solid form, *psychoanalysis*, is often seen, and is perfectly justified by the analogy of such words as *extraordinary* and *cooperate*.

A CHECK LIST OF HYPHENED COMPOUND WORDS

A

aard-vark
 aard-wolf
 able-bodied
 absent-minded, -ly,
 -ness
 adder's-mouth (bot.)
 adder's-tongue (bot.)
 after-born
 after-dinner
 air-tight
 all-round
 Anglo-African
 Anglo-American
 Anglo-Chinese
 Anglo-French
 Anglo-Indian
 Anglo-Saxon
 anti-Semitism, -ic,
 -ically
 anti-trade
 anti-Trinitarian
 Argus-eyed
 Austro-Hungarian
 Austro-Malayan
 auto-infection
 auto-inoculation
 auto-intoxication
 aye-aye (zool.)

B

babies'-breath (bot.)
 baby's-breath (bot.)
 bachelor's-button (bot.)
 baked-apple (bot.)
 bald-headed
 bald-pated
 base-burner
 battering-ram
 battle-ax, -axe

bear's-foot (bot.)
 beef-witted
 beetle-browed
 beggar-lice (bot.)
 beggar-ticks (bot.)
 black-a-vised
 black-letter, -ed
 blow-out
 blue-curls (bot.)
 blue-eyed
 blue-pencil (verb)
 blue-sky law
 brand-new
 bran-new
 bread-and-butter (adj.)
 break-up
 breech-loading
 bric-a-brac
 broken-hearted
 broken-winded
 brother-in-law
 brown-tailed moth
 bull-roarer
 bull's-eye
 by-bidder
 by-election
 bye-low
 by-end
 by-law
 by-name
 by-pass
 by-product
 by-talk

C

canker-root (bot.)
 cap-a-pie
 cast-iron (adj.)
 cast-off
 castor-oil plant
 cater-cornered

cater-cousin
 cat-o'-mountain
 cat-o'-nine-tails
 cat's-claw (bot.)
 cat's-eye (gem)
 cat's-paw
 cat-tail (bot.)
 chicken-hearted
 chick-pea (bot.)
 chock-full
 choke-full
 Christ's-thorn (bot.)
 chuck-full
 chuck-will's-widow
 (bird)

city-state
 close-hauled
 cloud-burst
 cloven-footed
 club-rush (bot.)
 co-author
 cock-a-hoop
 co-ed (also coed)
 cold-blooded
 cold-hearted
 color-blind
 come-at-able
 copper-nickel
 copple-crown, -ed
 country-dance
 court-martial
 court-plaster
 cousin-german
 cow-pilot (fish)
 cow-puncher
 crack-brained
 crane's-bill (also
 cranesbill)
 crop-eared
 cross-bun
 cross-examine,
 -examination,
 -examiner
 cross-fertilization,
 -fertilize
 cross-grained
 cross-pollination

cross-purpose
 cross-question
 cross-refer (but, cross
 reference)
 cross-stitch
 crow's-foot
 cuckoo-flower
 cul-de-sac
 cure-all
 cut-grass (bot.)
 cut-off
 cut-out

D

dare-devil
 daughter-in-law
 deaf-mute
 death's-head
 do-all
 dog-ear, -ed
 dog's-ear, -ed
 dog-rose (bot.)
 dog's-tail (bot.)
 dog's-tongue (bot.)
 dog's-tooth violet
 double-banked
 double-breasted
 double-dealing (also
 double dealing)
 double-dealer (also
 double dealer)
 double-decker
 double-entendre
 double-faced
 double-ganger
 double-minded
 double-quick
 double-ripper
 double-surfaced
 double-tongue (music)
 double-tongued
 draggle-tail
 drawing-room
 drink-hail
 drop-forge (but, drop
 forging)

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dry-clean
dry-cleanse
dry-shod
dub-a-dub
duck-footed
dumb-bell (gymnastics;
but, dumbbell, slang)
dumb-waiter
Dutchman's-breeches
(bot.)
Dutchman's-pipe (bot.)

E

eagle-eyed
end-organ
ex-cathedra (adj.)
extra-official
extra-red
extra-uterine

F

face-harden
fag-end
faint-hearted
fair-lead, -er
fair-minded, -ness
fair-spoken
fal-lal
false-hearted
fancy-free
fan-tailed
fan-tan
far-away (adj.)
far-fetched
far-forth
farmer-general
far-off
father-in-law
fawn-colored
feather-veined (bot.)
feeble-minded, -ness
fee-faw-fum
felo-de-se
fer-de-lance (snake)
fiddle-faddle

fin-footed
fire-new
first-born
first-class
first-hand
first-rate
five-finger (bot., fish)
flare-up
flat-footed
fleur-de-lis
float-feed
flower-de-luce (bot.)
fly-fish
fore-and-aft
fore-and-after
fore-tooth
fore-top gallant
fore-top mast
fore-top sail
forget-me-not (bot.)
foul-mouthed
four-cycle
four-in-hand
four-o'clock (bot.)
four-poster
four-way
four-wheeler
frame-up
free-born
free-hand
free-handed
free-hearted
free-living
free-soil (adj.), -er
free-spoken, -ness
free-swimmer
free-swimming
fresh-water (adj.)
frog-eye (bot.), -d

G

get-up
gill-flirt
go-ahead (adj.)
goat's-rue (bot.)
gold-filled

gold-of-pleasure (bot.)
 good-by, good-bye
 (also, goodbye)
 good-fellowhood
 good-fellowship
 good-humored, -ly
 good-natured, -ly
 good-tempered, -ly
 governor-general, -ship
 gravel-blind
 great-aunt (but,
 grandaunt)
 great-grandchild
 great-granddaughter
 great-grandfather
 great-grandmother
 great-grandson
 great-hearted
 great-uncle (but,
 granduncle)
 Greco-Roman
 green-eyed
 ground-hog day

H

ha-ha
 half-and-half (adj.)
 half-baked
 half-blood (also half
 blood)
 half-blooded
 half-boot
 half-breed
 half-caste
 half-hearted, -ly, -ness
 half-mast
 half-moon
 half-tone
 half-witted
 handy-dandy
 hanger-on
 happy-go-lucky
 hara-kiri (also, though
 incorrectly, hari-kari)
 hard-favored
 hard-fisted, -ness

hard-headed
 hard-hearted, -ly, -ness
 hard-set
 hard-shell
 hard-tack
 hart's-tongue (bot.;
 also, hartstongue)
 harum-scarum
 hat-tree
 hawk's-beard (bot.)
 hawk's-eye (bot.)
 head-hunter
 head-hunting
 heal-all
 heart-free
 heart-rending
 heart-whole
 heavy-hearted
 heavy-weight
 hell-cat
 helter-skelter
 high-bred
 high-flown
 high-handed
 high-holder
 high-low (boot)
 high-minded
 high-pressure (adj.)
 high-proof (adj.)
 high-seasoned (adj.)
 high-souled
 high-spirited
 high-strung
 high-toned
 eighty-tighty
 high-wrought
 hind-brain (anat.)
 hocus-pocus
 hoity-toity
 hokey-pokey
 hollow-hearted
 holus-bolus
 home-bred
 hop-o'-my-thumb
 horn-mad
 horse-chestnut
 horse-radish

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hot-head, -ed
hot-pot
hot-press, -er
hound's-tongue (bot.)
hubble-bubble
hugger-mugger
hurdy-gurdy
hurly-burly
hurry-scurry, hurry-
skurry

I

ill-bred
ill-starred
ill-tempered
ill-timed
ill-use (verb)
in-and-in (adj.)
Indo-African
Indo-Chinese
Indo-European
Indo-Germanic
internal-combustion
(adj.)
iron-gray, iron-grey

J

jack-a-dandy
jack-in-a-box
jack-in-the-box
jack-in-the-pulpit (bot.)
Jack-of-all-trades
jack-o'-lantern
jack-tar (sailor)
jerry-build, -er
joe-pye weed
jolly-boat
judge-made (adj.)

K

kick-off
kiln-dry
king-of-arms, king-at-
arms
king-pin
king-post

knee-deep
knee-high
knife-edge
knight-errant, -ry
knock-knee, -d
knock-out
know-nothing
Ku-Klux (also, Kuklux)

L

lady-killer
lady-killing
lady-bedstraw (bot.)
lady-finger (or, lady
finger)
lady's-slipper (bot.; or,
lady-slipper)
lady's-smock (bot.; or,
lady-smock)
land-poor (adj.)
lean-to
left-hand, -ed, -edness
leg-of-mutton (adj.)
letter-perfect (adj.)
let-up
light-fingered
light-foot, -ed, -edly
light-headed, -ly, -ness
light-hearted, -ly, -ness
light-horseman
light-minded
lignum-vitae
line-up (also lineup)
linsey-woolsey
lion-hearted
live-forever (bot.)
long-headed, -ness
long-sighted
long-suffering
long-winded
looker-on
looking-glass
lop-eared
lotus-eater (lotos-eater)
loving-kindness
low-necked

low-pressure (adj.)
low-spirited
lynx-eyed

M

magneto-dynamo
magneto-electric, -al
magneto-electricity
magneto-generator
main-topgallant
main-topmast
main-topsail
major-domo
make-believe
make-up
man-eater
man-of-war
mare's-nest
mare's-tail (bot.)
marvel-of-Peru (bot.)
master-at-arms
matter-of-fact (adj.)
mealy-mouthed
merry-andrew
merry-go-round
mid-brain
middle-aged
milk-livered
miller's-thumb (fish)
mischief-maker
mischief-making
monkey-cup (bot.)
monkey-pot (bot.)
monkey-puzzle (bot.)
moon-eye, -d
morning-glory (bot.)
moth-eat, -en
mother-in-law
mother-of-pearl
mouse-ear (bot.)
muscle-bound
muzzle-loading

N

narrow-minded
near-by

needle-point (lace)
ne'er-do-well
Neo-Darwinism
Neo-Hebraic
Neo-Lamarckism
Neo-Platonism,
-Platonist
new-fashioned
new-model (verb)
new-year (adj.)
nol-pros
non-pros
Norman-French
north-northeast
north-northwest

O

off-color
old-fangled
old-fashioned
old-world (adj.)
one-horse (adj.)
one-sided
one-step
open-air (adj.)
open-eyed
open-faced
open-handed, -ly, -ness
open-hearted
open-hearth (adj.)
open-mouthed
orang-utan, -outang,
ourang-outang
out-and-out (adj.)
out-Herod
out-of-door (adj.) out-
of-doors
out-of-the-way (adj.)
out-patient
over-sea (adj.); but,
oversea or overseas,
(adv.)
ox-eyed

P

pale-faced

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pall-mall (but, Pall Mall, London street)

Pan-American

Pan-Germanic, -Germanism

papier-mâché

parti-colored, party-colored

passer-by

pass-key

pea-jacket

pell-mell (also, pellmell)

penny-wise (also, penny wise)

pepper-and-salt (adj.)

pheasant's-eye (bot.)

photo-electric, -al

photo-electrotype

photo-engrave

photo-engraving

pigeon-toed

pig-headed

pince-nez

pin-fire (adj.)

ping-pong

planet-stricken

planet-struck

plano-concave

plano-convex

plug-ugly

pock-marked (but, pockmark)

point-blank

pom-pom

pooh-pooh

poor-spirited

post-mortem (adj.)

pot-vallant

pot-walloper

poult-de-soie

pound-foolish

Pre-Raphaelite,

-Raphaelitism

preterit-present,

preterite-present

prick-eared

priest-rid, -den

prittle-prattle

psycho-analysis (also psychoanalysis)

psycho-analyst (also, psychoanalyst)

pug-nosed

purse-proud

put-off

put-out

put-up

Q

quarter-deck

quartermaster-general

quarter-phase (adj.)

quarter-saw (verb)

queen-post

quick-fire, -firing

quick-witted

R

rabbit-wood (bot.)

racket-tail (bird)

rack-rent (verb), -er

rake-off

ran-tan

rapid-fire, -firing, -firer

rat-tail (adj.)

rattlesnake-root (bot.)

rattlesnake-weed

razor-backed (but, razorback)

razor-billed

re-act (meaning, to act again)

ready-made

ready-witted

rear-horse (insect)

red-hand, -ed

red-hot

red-letter

red-light district

red-tape (adj.), -tapism

re-lease (meaning, to lease again)

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re-trace (meaning, to
trace again)
right-about
right-angled
right-hand, -ed
ring-necked
ring-streaked
rocking-chair
rocking-horse
rolling-pin
roly-poly
rose-water (adj.)
round-shouldered
round-up
run-around, but
runaround)

S

saber-toothed
safe-conduct
safe-keeping
sailor's-choice (fish)
sand-blind (adj.)
sand-box tree
sans-culotte, -culottic,
culottism
save-all
sax-tuba
scape-wheel
sea-green (adj.)
sea-island (adj.)
sea-maid
second-class
second-rate
second-sight
self-abuse
self-acting
self-assured
self-assertion,
-assertive
self-colored
self-command
self-complacency
self-complacent
self-conceit, -ed
self-confidence

self-confident, -ly
self-conscious, -ly, -ness
self-consistent,
-consistency
self-contained
self-content
self-contradiction,
-contradictory
self-control
self-deceit
self-deception
self-defense, -defensive
self-delusion
self-denial
self-denying, -ly
self-dependent,
-dependence
self-derived
self-destruction,
-destructive
self-determined
self-devotion, -al
self-distrust
self-educated
self-esteem
self-evidence
self-evident, -ly
self-examination
self-executing
self-existence,
-existent
self-explaining
self-feeding, -feeder
self-government,
-governing
self-hardening,
-hardened
self-heal (bot.)
self-help
self-identify
self-importance,
-important
self-induced, -induction
self-indulgence,
-indulgent
self-insurance, -insurer
self-interest

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self-knowledge
self-love, -loving
self-made
self-murder, -er
self-opinion, -ated,
-opinioned
self-perception
self-possessed,
-possession
self-profit
self-recording
self-registering
self-reliance, -reliant
self-renunciation,
-renouncing
self-reproach, -ful
self-respect, -ing
self-restraint
self-righteous, -ness
self-sacrifice,
-sacrificing
self-satisfied,
-satisfaction
self-seeker, -seeking
self-sown
self-starter
self-styled
self-sufficient,
-sufficiency
self-sufficing
self-supported,
-supporting
self-surrender
self-will, -ed
self-winding
self-wrong
Semi-Arian
semi-porcelain
semi-public
send-off
serio-comic
set-off
set-to
seven-up (game)
sharp-cut (adj.)
sharp-set
sharp-shinned

sharp-sighted, -ness
sharp-witted
shepherd's-purse (bot.)
shock-dog
shock-headed
shoeing-horn (but,
shoehorn)
short-handed
short-lived
short-spoken
short-winded
shovel-nosed
silk-stocking (adj.)
Simon-pure
single-acting, -action
single-breasted
single-foot, -er
single-handed
single-hearted
single-minded
single-phase (adj.)
single-surfaced
sister-in-law
skin-deep
sky-blue
smash-up
smooth-bore
smooth-faced
snail-paced
snap-back (football)
snapper-back (football)
snow-blind
snow-bound
snow-broth
snub-nosed
sober-minded
so-called
soft-shell
sol-fa
son-in-law
so-so
south-southeast
south-southwest
span-new
spatter-dock (bot.)
spick-and-span
spindle-legged

spread-eagle (adj.)
 spur-heeled
 square-toed, -toes
 squint-eyed
 stalking-horse
 stall-feed (verb)
 stand-off
 stand-up (adj.)
 stark-naked
 star-nosed
 star-spangled
 states-general
 stem-winding, -winder
 step-down (adj.)
 step-parent (but, step-
 father, stepmother)
 stepping-stone
 step-up (adj.)
 stiff-hearted
 still-hunt
 stock-still
 stop-gap
 stork's-bill (bot.)
 story-teller
 stout-hearted, -ness
 straight-line (adj.)
 straight-out (adj.)
 strait-jacket
 straw-colored
 strong-minded, -ly,
 -ness
 sub-basement
 sub-bass, -base
 sulphur-bottom (whale)
 sun-struck (but,
 sunstroke)
 supple-jack (bot.)
 sure-footed
 swallow-tailed (but,
 swallowtail)
 swan's-down (also,
 swansdown)
 sway-backed

T

table-land

tailor-made
 take-off
 tender-hearted
 ten-strike (tenpins)
 tête-à-tête (but, ad-
 verbially, tête à tête)
 thin-skinned
 thirty-second
 three-color
 three-decker
 three-mile (adj.)
 three-phase
 three-ply
 three-port
 three-quarter binding
 three-square
 tie-up
 tiger-eye (gem)
 time-honored
 time-table
 title-page
 tittle-tattle
 to-do
 tom-tom
 tongue-tie, -d
 top-dress, -ing
 top-heavy, -heaviness
 topsy-turvy
 torpedo-boat destroyer
 toss-up
 touch-me-not (bot.)
 trade-mark (but, trade
 name)
 trade-union, -unionism,
 -unionist, trades-
 union, etc.
 tragi-comedy, -comic,
 -comical
 truckle-bed
 true-blue
 true-lover's knot
 trundle-bed
 try-square
 Turk's-cap lily
 tutti-frutti
 tu-whit
 tu-whoo

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twin-screw
two-cycle
two-edged
two-faced, -ly
two-handed
two-phase
two-ply
two-port
two-step
two-way

U

U-boat
un-American

V

Venus's-flytrap (bot.)
Venus's-hair (bot.)
virgin's-bower (bot.)
vis-à-vis

W

wagon-headed
wait-a-bit (bot.)
wake-robin (bot.)
walk-over
wall-eye, -d
warm-blooded
water-closet
water-cool
water-logged
water-soak
water-tight
weather-beaten
weather-bound
web-footed
week-end
well-being
well-born
well-bred
well-doer
well-doing
well-favored

well-found
well-nigh
well-spoken
well-to-do
well-wisher
whipper-in
white-eye (bird)
white-faced
white-livered
white-throated
whole-hearted, -ly, -ness
whole-souled
wide-awake
willow-herb (also,
willow herb)
willy-nilly
wind-broken
wind-up
witch-elm
witches'-besom, -broom
witch-hazel
withe-rod (bot.)
wood-note
working-day
worldly-minded, -ness
worldly-wise
world-wide
worm-eaten
worn-out
would-be
wrong-headed
wry-necked
wych-elm

Y

y-cleped, -clept
yellow-covered
yellow-hammer (bird)
ylang-ylang (bot.)

Z

Zend-Avesta

HOW TO DIVIDE ENGLISH WORDS

The final arbiter of any division of a particular word should be a good dictionary, accepted and followed consistently as the standard. But there are principles on which syllabication is based in whatever dictionary is selected. These principles may be set down as rules to be followed for the sake of good usage. The rules recorded here are based on the practice of Webster's New International Dictionary.

Compounds of English Words.—When compounds are formed of English words which remain unchanged in meaning in the compound, the syllabication is properly into these elemental parts. Thus, *footstool* should be divided "foot-stool." *bootblack* should be divided "boot-black," etc.

Diphthongs, Digraphs, etc.—Two or more letters representing a diphthong, digraph, tri-graph, or other element essentially a unit, either vowel or consonant, must not be divided in syllabication. Common diphthongs are "oi" as in *boil*, "ou" as in *hour*, etc. Digraphs and trigraphs may be either vowel or consonant. Vowel forms are "ai" as in *aisle*, "eau" as in "beautiful," etc. Consonant forms are "ph" as in *graphic*, "gh" as in *righteous*, "th" as in *wither*, "sh" as in *thresher*, "gn" as in *consigned*, "ng" as in *singing*, "ss" as in *crosses*, "sc" as in *conscious*, "sch" as in *schedule* or *schist*, "ck" as in *black*, etc.

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Sometimes there are exceptions to the "ss" digraph rule, for in such words as *passion*, *digression*, *pressure*, etc., the "ss" is commonly divided in syllabication, as "*pas-sion*," "*di-gres-sion*," "*pres-sure*," etc.

Two Adjacent Vowels Pronounced Separately. If two vowels coming together are pronounced separately, they are to be separated in dividing the word. Examples: *pliant* (pli-ant), *curiosity* (cu-ri-os-i-ty), *psychoanalysis* (psy-cho-a-nal-y-sis), *buoyant* (buoy-ant), *coward* (cow-ard), *piety* (pi-e-ty), etc.

Consonants That Must Not End a Syllable.—"Soft" consonants, as the c in *invincible*, the g in *wager* or *exigent* (divided as follows; in-vin-cible, wa-ger, ex-i-gent.) Exceptions to this rule are words ending with a recognized English suffix, such as -ing, -er, -ed, and so on. Such words are *convincing*, *staging*, *advancer*, etc. (divided as follows: con-vinc-ing, stag-ing, advanc-er). Other exceptions are words in which the soft c or g comes after a short accented vowel, with no other consonant intervening, as in *logic*, *regicide*, *capacity*, *precipice*, etc. (divided as follows: log-ic, reg-i-cide, ca-pac-i-ty, prec-i-pice). Words in which the soft "g" forms part of the digraph "dg," as *judgment* or *lodgment*, are also exceptions, the "dg" remaining with the vowel preceding, as "*lodg-ment*," "*judg-ment*."

Consonants which take on part of the sound of the following vowel, either i or e, as the t in "*-tion*," the c in "*-cious*," the s in "*-sion*," the

d in *soldier*, etc., must not end a syllable. These consonants include t, s, z, c, sc, g, d. The sounds given these consonants when they so absorb part of the following i or e may be represented as "sh," "zh," "ch," or "j." Some words of this class are *revision*, *examination*, *precious*, *conscience*, *soldier*, *pigeon*, *contagion*, etc. (divided as follows: re-vi-sion, ex-am-i-na-tion, pre-cious, con-science, sol-dier, pi-geon, con-ta-gion). *Righteous* and its derivatives are exceptions to this rule. Seeming exceptions also are *omniscient* (om-nis-cient), which is patterned after *efficient* (ef-fi-cient), and *passion* (pas-sion), which has already been mentioned under a preceding rule about the digraph "ss."

If the consonants s, z, t, d, precede u, and approach the sound of "sh," "zh," "ch," or "j," the same rule applies. Examples are: *nature*, *procedure*, *seizure*, *assure* (divided: na-ture, pro-ce-dure, sei-zure, as-sure). However, if the preceding vowel is short and is accented, the s, z, t, or d, preceding the u and having its sound modified as described, is joined to the preceding accented vowel or vowel digraph—provided no other consonant intervenes. This is best shown by the example *azure*, *gradual*, *stature*, *measure*, *natural* (az-ure, grad-u-al, sta-ture, meas-ure, nat-u-ral). This rule, however, does not hold if it conflicts with the rule (below) for recognized prefixes and suffixes. Exceptions to this rule are *fraudulence*, *spiritual*, etc. (fraud-u-lence, spir-it-u-al).

Consonants That Must Not Begin a Syllable.—If x is pronounced like "ks" or "kz" it must

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never begin a syllable. Examples:: *flexible*, *anxious*, *exasperate*, *taxation*, *crucifixion* (flex-ible; anx-ious, ex-as-per-ate, tax-a-tion, cru-ci-fix-ion).

If r is preceded by the sound of a in *parent*, or the "ea" in *bearer*, or the "ai" in *fairest* (which are identical sounds); or by the sound of e in *average*, then r must not begin a syllable. Examples: *parentage*, *numerous*, *several*, *hairiest* (par-ent-age, nu-mer-ous, sev-er-al, hair-i-est).

If a single l or n is followed by the vowel i with the sound of the consonant y, then the l or n must not begin a syllable. Examples: *opinion*, *onion*, *alien*, *peculiar*, *convenience* (o-pin-ion, on-ion, al-ien, pe-cul-iar, con-ven-ience). If the l or n is doubled (as in *stallion* or *ebullient*) it comes under a rule below.

Recognized Prefixes and Suffixes.—If a prefix or suffix is beyond question—that is, is easily shown to be such—it should be separated in syllabication. Common prefixes are: dis, com, pre, re, ab, ob, ill, in, non, un, etc. Common suffixes are: er, est, ness, ist, tion, ish, ble, al, ly, etc. These prefixes and suffixes are commonly separated from the body of the word in syllabication even if the words come under some other rule given here—this rule takes precedence. The rule applies whether the suffixes are directly added, or take the place of a silent e which is dropped (as mak-er).

Examples are: *blackish*, *blacken*, *consenting*,

displaced, *likable*, *dancer*, *inexplicable*, *deodorizer*, *anecdotal*, etc. (black-ish, black-en, con-sent-ing, dis-placed, lik-a-ble, danc-er, in-expli-ca-ble, de-o-doriz-er, an-ec-dot-al). If the suffix doubles the final consonant of the original word, the added consonant goes with the added syllable, thus: *rubber* (rub-ber), *occurring* (oc-cur-ring), *demurred* (de-mur-red).

However, if the derivatives are not pronounced as the parts were in the original word, or if the spelling is altered in any way, the rule does not hold. (Shifting the accent is considered as a change in pronunciation.) Thus, *maintenance* is formed from *maintain*, with the suffix -ance, but the rule does not hold because of altered spelling and pronunciation; the syllabication is main-te-nance. Other examples are: *resident* from *reside* (res-i-dent), *declamation* from *declaim* (dec-la-ma-tion).

Further, unless the meaning of the original word is maintained in the derivative, the rule does not hold. For example, though *trustee* is formed from *trust* plus the suffix -ee, the meaning is considerably affected; the word *trustee* is properly divided trus-tee. Also consider *treatise* (trea-tise) from *treat*—the meaning is not at all similar.

Words ending with the suffixes -ive or -or (not to be confused with the English suffix -er), are to be divided as the Latin or French words from which they are derived, or must be patterned after the models on which they are formed. Examples are: *instructive*, *instructor*,

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instructress, creative, creator (in-struc-tive, in-struc-tor, in-struc-tress, cre-a-tive, cre-a-tor).

The double suffix *-ical* is to be divided *-i-cal*, as *comical* (com-i-cal), *hysterical* (hys-ter-i-cal), etc.

Single Consonants Between Sounded Vowels.—If a single consonant (or an equivalent digraph or trigraph, as “th,” “sch,” etc.) comes between two sounded vowels (or equivalent diphthongs having the force of single vowels), the single consonant belongs with the following vowel. Examples are *flavor, beautiful, rectify, roguish, treason, exhibition, expiatory* (fla-vor, beau-ti-ful, rec-ti-fy, ro-guish, trea-son, ex-hi-bi-tion, ex-pi-a-to-ry).

Exceptions are as follows:

If the preceding vowel is short and accented, the consonant stays with it; thus: *explanatory, vivid, academy, academic, woman, prophet, prophetic, validity*, etc., (ex-plan-a-to-ry, viv-id, a-cad-e-my, ac-a-dem-ic, wom-an, proph-et, proph-et-ic, va-lid-i-ty). But if the vowel is short and accented preceding a consonantal sound that is not to end a syllable or begin a syllable (see above), the rule does not hold, as in *vision* (vi-sion).

A short vowel, though unaccented, in a prefix must take the following consonant. Examples are *disappear, mispronounce, inordinate* (dis-ap-pear, mis-pro-nounce, in-or-di-nate). This comes under the rule for prefixes (above).

Sometimes an unaccented vowel, especially u, but also other obscured vowels (as e in *racketeer*), especially if they occur in an unaccented root syllable, may keep the following consonant in division. Examples are *custom-ary*, *musketeer*, *recitation* (cus-tom-a-ry, mus-keet-er, rec-ita-tion).

A long vowel may keep the following consonant if one of the preceding rules applies, as *alien* (rule for l before i sounded like y), *maker* (rule for recognized suffixes).

Two or More Consonants Between Sounded Vowels.—If two or more consonants, such that they may begin a syllable, occur between sounded vowels, they may all go with the following syllable or be divided, according to the following principles:

If the preceding vowel is long and accented, or can properly end an unaccented syllable, both consonants may go with the following vowel. Examples are *cyclone*, *ogress*, *people*, *ogle*, *matrix* (cy-clone, o-gress, peo-ple, o-gle, ma-trix). Also if the following vowel is under an accent, as in *cyclonic*, *acrostic*, *reflection*, *hieroglyphic*, *conscription*, *between*, *immigration* (cy-clon-ic, a-cros-tic, re-flec-tion, hi-er-o-glyph-ic, con-scrip-tion, be-tween, im-mi-gra-tion).

If the preceding vowel is short, one of the consonants may be joined to it. Examples are *goblet*, *equitable*, *astrology*, *estimation*, *illustrate*, especially (gob-let, eq-ui-ta-ble, as-trol-

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o-gy, es-ti-ma-tion, il-lus-trate, es-pe-cial-ly). *Trouble* and *double*, and similar words, are exceptions (divided: trou-ble, dou-ble, etc.). Also, if the particular consonants happens to be "st," "str," or "sp," and the vowel in the preceding or following syllable is accented, one of the consonants may go with the preceding syllable. Examples are *pastry*, *oyster*, *respiration* (pas-try, oys-ter, res-pi-ra-tion). The rule for consonants that must not end or begin syllables (above) still applies, ahead of this rule.

Consonantal combinations like "st," which may either begin or end a syllable, may be joined entirely to the preceding vowel, particularly if the following vowel is a recognized suffix (see earlier rule about suffixes). Examples are *wasted*, *poster*, *eastern*, *grasper* (wast-ed, post-er, east-ern, grasp-er).

If two or more consonants coming between sounded vowels are such that they cannot together begin a syllable, one or more but not all of them is joined to the preceding vowel, whether the vowel is short or long. Examples are *symbolism*, *mortgage*, *architecture*, *repulsive*, *diphthong*, *handle* (sym-bol-ism, mort-gage, arch-i-tec-ture, re-pul-sive, diph-thong, han-dle). The rule for suffixes and prefixes, when the spelling and pronunciation and meaning remain intact, takes precedence here, as in *adding*, *attempted*, *contemptible* (add-ing, at-tempt-ed, con-tempt-i-ble). A particularly strong instance of the application of this rule is when a consonant is doubled between sounded vowels, when the doubled consonant is usually di-

vided in syllabication, thus, *syllabication*, *stab-ber*, *dabbling*, *illustrate* (syl-lab-i-ca-tion, stab-ber, dab-bling, il-lus-trate). Exception: *distill-ate* (dis-till-ate), because of suffix -ate.

Foreign Word Combinations.—Certain foreign words contain combinations of consonants, in which the sound of the English y plays a part, which are kept in the same syllable, regardless of preceding rules. Examples are *poignant*, *imbroglio*, *seraglio*, *cognac* (poi-gnant, im-bro-glio, se-ragl-io, co-gnac. Double l usually is divided, however; refer to the last paragraph of the section immediately preceding this.

Final Warning.—No syllable may be divided as such unless it contains a vowel. For example, in the word *chasm* there are, strictly speaking, two syllables: cha- and -sm. However, these may not be divided in writing or printing because the last syllable contains no vowel. The word *chasm*, or any similar word, must always be printed undivided.

In good printing, it is considered bad form to carry over a syllable of one letter only, or to end a line with a syllable of one letter only. It is wise to avoid divisions of words of two syllables, when the syllables are short (as two letters each). An unpronounced -ed ending should never be carried over (as in *walked*).

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS BOOK

adj., adjective

adv., adverb

anat., anatomy or anatomical

bot., botany or botanical

zool., zoology or zoological









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